

ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION AGENDA
TWO HUNDRED ELEVENTH MEETING

Jarrett Prairie Center
7993 North River Road
Byron, Illinois 61010

May 8, 2012 9:00 a.m.

*Documentary Material Enclosed

Item 1: Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees

Item 2:* Adoption of Agenda

Item 3:* Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes, January 23, 2012, and the 210th Meeting Minutes, January 24, 2012

Item 4: 2012 Meeting Schedule

September 11, 2012 – Monroe County Annex Building, Waterloo

Item 5: INPC Staff Report

REPORT

Randy Heidorn, Kelly Neal, and Jenny Skufca
Nature Preserves Commission

Item 6: IDNR Staff Report

REPORT

Don McFall
Department of Natural Resources

Item 7: Endangered Species Protection Board Staff Report

REPORT

Anne Mankowski
Endangered Species Protection Board Director

Item 8:* Jo Daviess Co. – Eagles Nest Land and Water Reserve, Registration

The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) seeks to permanently register 119.787 acres as Eagles Nest Land and Water Reserve. The proposed land and water reserve is located in the Wisconsin Driftless Natural Division and will help protect 1.8 miles of the Lower Apple River Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) site (#1647). This INAI site is a Category II site for being a perennial stream supporting three state-threatened species. The INAI site is

also recognized as Category VI for the unusual concentration of freshwater mussels; supporting 18 species of live native mussels with an additional 11 species found dead or weathered in 2002. The proposed land and water reserve lies adjacent to Hanover Bluff Land and Water Reserve, Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve, and an INAI site (#1058), as well as the Hanover Bluff State Natural Area. The proposed site includes 73.95 acres of active agricultural land and 21.78 acres of land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The agricultural land will be planted to native prairie as part of an approved management plan included as part of this registration proposal. The landowner will not seek extension of the current CRP leases beyond the current contract periods (2016). The acquisition and restoration of the proposed Eagles Nest Land and Water Reserve is funded, in part, by a State Wildlife Grant. As part of the grant requirements, the JDCF is required to permanently protect the property. After implementing the habitat restoration plan for the proposed land and water reserve, the JDCF may pursue transferring the property to the IDNR. The site name is derived from an active bald eagle nest located on site. This site will support the priority actions for the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP) identified in the streams and forest campaigns.

REPORT

Chris Kirkpatrick

Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Registration Approval

Item 9:* Johnson Co. – Wise Ridge Land and Water Reserve, Registration

The IDNR proposes to permanently register 388 acres as Wise Ridge Land and Water Reserve. The proposed land and water reserve is located in the northeast corner of Johnson County. The site is a forested upland with significant natural communities identified by the INAI (#0060) as grade B dry upland forest and dry-mesic upland forest. A small limestone glade was also listed by the inventory as notable. Wise Ridge is at the north boundary of the Greater Shawnee Hills Section of the Shawnee Hills Natural Division. The registration of this site will help support goals of the IWAP in the forests, land and water stewardship and invasive species campaigns. The Tunnel Hill State Trail, an existing IDNR recreation site, lies along portions of the south and east boundary of the proposed land and water reserve. Location along a popular hiking and biking trail will provide opportunities for public education on issues such as land restoration, forest community management, prescribed fire and invasive species.

REPORT

Bob Lindsay

Department of Natural Resources

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Registration Approval

Item 10:* Tazewell Co. – Independence Park Woods Land and Water Reserve, Registration

The Pekin Park District seeks to permanently register 269.69 acres at Independence Park Woods Land and Water Reserve. Independence Park Woods is located between Marquette Heights and Creve Coeur, just south of Interstate 474 in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. Until 1972, Caterpillar Tractor Company owned the site and used much of the area as a proving ground for testing heavy equipment. Although

approximately one third of the area has been degraded from these activities and earlier coal mining, the remainder of the site was left largely intact, though not untouched. Since acquiring the site in 1972, the Pekin Park District has passively managed it as a recovering natural area, allowing a variety of visitor activities, which would continue upon registration with certain restrictions. Today, areas directly impacted by proving ground activities are in various stages of community development, including grade D upland forests dominated by black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and shrublands with native trees and shrubs as well as non-native species such as autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*). It should be noted that these shrublands provide habitat for a unique assemblage of shrubland birds, four of which have been identified in the IWAP as species in greatest need of conservation. The main community type at Independence Park Woods, however, is forest. Grade C dry-mesic upland forest is the most widespread forested community type. Although most older stands are dominated by white oak (*Quercus alba*), red oak (*Q. rubra*), and shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*), black locust can be a common species in the lower quality stands along with a variety of other species such as hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), elm (*Ulmus* spp.), and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*). Regardless of the forest's botanical quality, Independence Park Woods meets the criteria for registration as a land and water reserve by containing well over 100 acres of contiguous forest that supports 17 breeding bird species considered sensitive to forest fragmentation; of these species, five are also species in greatest need of conservation. The long-term management goal for Independence Park Woods is to maintain contiguous forest coverage on the entire site. Improving forest quality is a secondary goal. Registration of Independence Park Woods will support the IWAP through the invasive species, forest, and land and water stewardship campaigns.

REPORT

Tom Lerczak

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Registration Approval

Item 11:* Vermilion Co. – 4th Addition to Little Vermilion River Land and Water Reserve, Registration

The 4th addition to the Little Vermilion River Land and Water Reserve is a 30-acre forest owned and managed by the IDNR. This site is an addition to the southwest part of the 1098.19-acre Little Vermilion River Land and Water Reserve, which is part of the Harry “Babe” Woodyard State Natural Area located south of Danville in the Vermilion River Section of the Wabash Border Natural Division. The original Little Vermilion River Land and Water Reserve was an 835-acre site registered by the IDNR in 1998 (Resolution 1411). This 30-acre addition increases the size of the Land and Water Reserve to 1128.19 acres. Little Vermilion River Land and Water Reserve protects and buffers the Little Vermilion River, a biologically significant stream recognized by the INAI (#1140) and is habitat for eight state-threatened or endangered animals and plants. The Land and Water Reserve protects approximately 3.4 miles of the Little Vermilion River in two distinct segments: 2.2 miles in the main Land and Water Reserve and 1.2 miles in the disjunct Georgetown addition. Conservation and stewardship of lands within the fourth addition to Little Vermilion River Land and Water Reserve will provide greater habitat for forest-interior birds and supply additional watershed protection to the river. This 30-acre addition contains dry-mesic and mesic upland forest, but does not include river frontage or riparian corridor. No

state-listed species are reported from the addition. Protection of this addition supports action steps identified in the IWAP for the streams campaign and the forest campaign.

REPORT

Roger Jansen

Department of Natural Resources

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Registration Approval

Item 12:* Marshall Co. – Buffer Addition to Hopewell Hill Prairies Nature Preserve, Dedication

Maury Brucker and Emiko Yang seek preliminary approval for dedication of lot #108 (2.2 acres) as a buffer addition to Hopewell Hill Prairies Nature Preserve. Hopewell Estates Hill Prairies Natural Area (INAI #0231) is located within the village of Hopewell, approximately 20 miles northeast of Peoria in the Grand Prairie Section of the Grand Prairie Natural Division. Lot #108 is composed of grade C dry-mesic upland forest with species such as red oak (*Quercus rubra*), white oak (*Q. alba*), shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*), and redbud (*Cercis canadensis*). Further into the lot, as the ground slopes downward toward a deep ravine system, the community tends to become more mesic, with fern species present (e.g., Christmas fern [*Polystichum acrostichoides*]) as well as sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) and American basswood (*Tilia americana*). Though lot #108 does not contain hill prairie remnants, it is necessary to protect as much of the natural area's intact grade C forest as possible in order to capture the hill prairie-forest ecological complex. The IWAP would be supported by this dedication through the forest, farmland and prairie, and invasive species campaigns. Eight bird species observed on lot #108 are listed as species in greatest need of conservation. If approved, the proposed buffer addition would increase the size of Hopewell Hill Prairies Nature Preserve to 11 acres.

REPORT

Tom Lerczak

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Preliminary Approval for Dedication

Item 13:* DuPage Co. – Brewster Creek Marsh Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (FPDDC) seeks final approval for dedication of 256.88 acres of Pratt's Wayne Woods Forest Preserve (190.64 acres as nature preserve and 66.24 acres as buffer) as Brewster Creek Marsh Nature Preserve. The proposed nature preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the far northwestern corner of DuPage County and lies within the boundary of the Pratt's Wayne Woods INAI site (#1401). This INAI site has been recognized as a Category II site (presence of endangered or threatened species) because of the presence of ten state-listed animals and three state-listed plants. Of these, the three state-listed plant species [dwarf bur reed (*Sparganium chlorocarpum*), green yellow sedge (*Carex viridula*), and marsh speedwell (*Veronica scutellata*); and eight state-listed animals [American bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), black tern (*Chlidonias niger*), black-crowned night-heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), common moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*), least bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), yellow-headed blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*), and a reptile] are associated with the grade C freshwater marsh community at this site. The other state-listed species present at this site include the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and black-

billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*). The site also includes a low-gradient small stream and a cultural community referred to as managed grassland. Protection of Brewster Creek Marsh as an Illinois nature preserve is consistent with elements of wetland and grassland campaigns of the IWAP and provides critical habitat for wildlife species in greatest need of conservation. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 210th Meeting in January, 2012 (Resolution 2165).

REPORT

Erik Neidy

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 14:* DuPage Co. – Des Plaines Riverway Nature Preserve, Dedication

The FPDDC seeks final approval for dedication of 75 acres of the Des Plaines River Forest Preserve as Des Plaines Riverway Nature Preserve. The proposed nature preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the far southeastern corner of DuPage County. Although the proposed Des Plaines Riverway Nature Preserve is not an INAI site, the site does support qualifying features for this designation that include the presence of the state-threatened marsh speedwell (*Veronica scutellata*), cerulean warbler (*Dendroica cerulean*), black-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*), and state-endangered black-crowned night-heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*). These species all occur within suitable habitat in the proposed nature preserve, and the site supports three natural communities including the wet floodplain forest, wet-mesic floodplain forest, and freshwater marsh and two cultural communities that include managed grassland and old field. The wet floodplain forest is considered the finest example of this community within DuPage County. Protection of Des Plaines Riverway as an Illinois nature preserve supports elements of the forest and wetlands campaigns of the IWAP and provides critical habitat for wildlife species in greatest need of conservation. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 210th Meeting in January, 2012 (Resolution 2166).

REPORT

Erik Neidy

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 15:* DuPage Co. – Meacham Grove Nature Preserve, Dedication

The FPDDC seeks final approval for dedication of 49 acres of the Meacham Grove Forest Preserve as Meacham Grove Nature Preserve. The proposed nature preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the north-central part of DuPage County and encompasses the Meacham Grove INAI site (#0523) which was recognized for high-quality dry-mesic and mesic upland forest. To date, the FPDDC staff have recorded 280 native plant species from the site. The proposed nature preserve supports the state-threatened Wood's stiff sedge (*Carex woodii*) and three birds [northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), and wood thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*)] identified in the IWAP as species in greatest need of conservation. Protection of Meacham Grove as an Illinois nature preserve supports elements of the forest campaign of the IWAP and provides critical habitat for three wildlife species in greatest need of

conservation. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 210th Meeting in January, 2012 (Resolution 2167).

REPORT

Erik Neidy

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 16:* DuPage Co. – Swift Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

The FPDDC seeks final approval for dedication of a 116-acre mosaic of natural communities (71 acres as nature preserve and 45 acres as buffer) within the Swift Prairie Forest Preserve as Swift Prairie Nature Preserve. The proposed nature preserve is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in the east-central part of DuPage County and encompasses much of the western portion of the Swift Road Meadow INAI site (#1391). This Category II INAI site includes grade C wet prairie and grade C sedge meadow that support a population of a state-endangered and federally listed species. Other natural communities include freshwater marsh and low-gradient small stream. Cultural communities include old field, artificial impoundment, and a community reconstruction. In addition to the federally-listed plant species, the proposed nature preserve supports a state-threatened plant, eared false foxglove (*Tomanthera auriculata*), least bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), Kirtland's snake (*Clonophis kirtlandii*), state-endangered black-crowned night-heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), and a reptile. To date, the FPDDC staff have recorded 359 native plant species from the site. The proposed Swift Prairie Nature Preserve supports 21 species (18 vertebrates and three invertebrates) identified in the IWAP as species in greatest need of conservation. Protection of Swift Prairie as an Illinois nature preserve supports elements of the wetland and grassland and prairie campaigns of the IWAP and provides critical habitat for 21 species in greatest need of conservation. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 210th Meeting in January, 2012 (Resolution 2168).

REPORT

Erik Neidy

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 17:* DuPage Co. – West Chicago Prairie Buffer Addition to Truitt-Hoff Nature Preserve, Dedication

The FPDDC seeks final approval for dedication of 37 acres as a buffer addition to Truitt-Hoff Nature Preserve. The proposed buffer addition is located in the Morainal Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in west-central part of DuPage County. This proposal represents the second buffer addition at this site and would increase the size of the nature preserve from its current size of 285.475 acres (Truitt-Hoff Nature Preserve, 115.974 acres and West Chicago Prairie buffer addition, 169.5 acres) to 322.475 acres. The proposed buffer addition is located just outside the boundary of, but adjacent to, the West Chicago Prairie INAI site (#0505). The INAI site is also known as the West Chicago Prairie buffer addition. The proposed addition supports freshwater marsh and mesic prairies that support populations of a state-endangered reptile and state-threatened plant. The state-endangered American bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) occurs in the wetlands that extend from this

proposed buffer addition into the existing Nature Preserve. Protection of this parcel as a buffer addition is consistent with elements of good preserve design and the wetland and grassland campaigns of the IWAP and provides critical habitat for wildlife species in greatest need of conservation. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 210th Meeting in January, 2012 (Resolution 2169).

REPORT

Erik Neidy

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 18:* Lake Co. – McLean Woods and Wetlands Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD) seeks final approval for dedication of 533 acres of the 2751.7-acre Lakewood Forest Preserve as McLean Woods and Wetlands Nature Preserve. The proposed nature preserve includes 418.2 acres as nature preserve and 114.8 acres as nature preserve buffer. The proposed nature preserve honors the support of the McLean family and is located in the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in southwestern Lake County, within the Lake-McHenry Wetlands Complex Conservation Opportunity Area. The proposed nature preserve includes grade C/D dry-mesic forest and grade C/D freshwater marsh and extensive natural community reconstructions. The proposed nature preserve also supports populations of a state-endangered reptile, eight state-endangered birds: the American bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), black tern (*Chlidonias niger*), common moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*), black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), Forester's tern (*Sterna forsteri*), common tern (*Sterna hirundo*), and yellow-headed black bird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*). There are also three state-threatened bird species: the black-billed cuckoo (*Cucyzyus erythrophthalmus*), cerulean warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*), and least bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*). Protection and stewardship of the proposed McLean Woods and Wetlands Nature Preserve support action #1 and #2 of the IWAP wetlands campaign "... to improve the condition of existing and artificial wetlands" and develop additional wetland habitat; action #3 of the farmland and prairie campaign for restoring and enhancing acreage for rare/extirpated species (specifically prairies and grassland nesting birds), and actions #1 and #2 of the forest campaign to "maintain and enhance forest composition, increase acreage/habitat connectivity, and management of forest communities." The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 209th Meeting in September, 2011 (Resolution 2151).

REPORT

Steven Byers

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 19:* McHenry Co. – Addition and Buffer Addition to Barber Fen Nature Preserve, Dedication

The McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD) seeks final approval for dedication of a 68.8-acre addition (49.2 acres as nature preserve addition and 19.6 acres as buffer addition) to the 18.5-acre Barber Fen Nature Preserve. Barber Fen Nature Preserve is owned by Rodney and Libbie Aavang and was dedicated as an Illinois nature preserve in November, 1990 at the Commission's 130th Meeting (Resolution 1064). Barber Fen Nature Preserve and

the proposed addition are located in the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in McHenry County, within the Lake-McHenry Wetlands Complex Conservation Opportunity Area and the MCCD's Queen Anne Macrosite. The Nature Preserve and much of the proposed addition lie within the Barber Fen INAI site (#1267) and a portion of the Nippersink Creek INAI site (#1506). The proposed addition includes grade B/C sedge meadow, grade B/C graminoid fen, grade C mesic forest, grade C wet-mesic floodplain forest, high-quality low-gradient small stream and pond aquatic communities, and old field and pastureland cultural communities. To date, 341 native plant species have been recorded from the Nature Preserve and proposed addition, and the site supports the state-endangered nodding trillium (*Trillium cernuum*) and state-threatened pale vetchling (*Lathyrus ochroleucus*). The creek and adjacent wetlands support a state-endangered reptile, the state-threatened least bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*) and two mussels (spike [*Elliptio dilatata*] and slippershell mussel [*Alasmidonta viridis*]). Extensive wildlife surveys conducted by the MCCD report 12 bird, eight fish, two reptile, four mussel and six butterfly species from the site that are identified by the IWAP as "...species in greatest need of conservation." Protection and stewardship of the proposed addition supports action #1 of the Wetlands Campaign "... to improve the condition of existing and artificial wetlands" and action #6 of the Streams Campaign "...to restore and manage high-quality examples of all river, stream, lake, and pond communities..." Dedication of the proposed addition will increase Barber Fen Nature Preserve from 18.5 to 87.3 acres and honor the Aavang's vision for land protection. This proposal reserves the right for the MCCD to conduct a master planning process to determine appropriate public access and recreation opportunities in accordance with INPC guidelines. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 209th Meeting in September, 2011 (Resolution 2152).

REPORT

Steven Byers

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 20:* McHenry Co. – Buffer Addition to Bystricky Prairie Nature Preserve, Dedication

The MCCD seeks final approval for dedication of 116.7 acres as a nature preserve buffer addition to the 17.4-acre Bystricky Prairie Nature Preserve. Bystricky Prairie was owned by Joseph and Harriet Bystricky when the site was dedicated as an Illinois nature preserve in September, 1987 at the Commission's 115th Meeting (Resolution 956). Bystricky Prairie Nature Preserve and the proposed buffer addition are located in the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in McHenry County, within the Lake-McHenry Wetlands Complex Conservation Opportunity Area and the MCCD's Queen Anne Macrosite. The proposed buffer addition encompasses nearly all the Slough Creek Sedge Meadow INAI site (#0715) and includes grade C/D sedge meadow, grade C/D wet-mesic prairie, grade C/D low-gradient small stream, and two cultural communities consisting of an old field and community reconstruction. To date, 249 native plant species have been recorded from the Nature Preserve and proposed buffer addition including a federally-listed species, two state-listed plants, state-endangered tall sunflower (*Helianthus giganteus*), downy yellow painted cup (*Castilleja sessiflora*), queen-of-the-prairie (*Filipendula rubra*), and balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*). Wildlife surveys conducted by the MCCD report four butterflies (silver-bordered fritillary [*Boloria selene*]; purplish copper [*Lycaena helloides*]; Dion skipper

[*Eupheys dion*]; and broad-winged skipper [*Poanes viator*]) and one fish (central mudminnow [*Umbra limi*]) from the site that are identified in the IWAP as “...species in greatest need of conservation.” Protection and stewardship of the proposed addition supports action #1 of the wetland campaign to “...improve the condition of existing and natural wetlands.” Dedication of the proposed buffer addition will increase Bystricky Prairie Nature Preserve from 17.4 to 134.1 acres and honor Joseph Bystricky’s vision for land protection. This proposal reserves the right for the MCCD to conduct a master planning process to determine appropriate public access and recreation opportunities in accordance with INPC guidelines. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission’s 209th Meeting in September, 2011 (Resolution 2153).

REPORT

Steven Byers

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Final Approval for Dedication

Item 21:* McHenry Co. – Addition to Lind Forest Nature Preserve, Dedication

The MCCD seeks final approval for dedication of a 44.1-acre addition (33.3 acres as nature preserve addition and 10.8 acres as buffer addition) to the 20-acre Lind Forest Nature Preserve. Lind Forest was owned by Helen Lind when the site was dedicated as an Illinois nature preserve in May, 1993 at the Commission’s 139th Meeting (Resolution 1184). The site was acquired by the MCCD in December, 2002. Lind Forest Nature Preserve and the proposed addition are located in the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division in McHenry County, within the Lake-McHenry Wetlands Complex Conservation Opportunity Area and the MCCD’s Queen Anne Macrosite. The Nature Preserve and a small portion of the proposed addition lie within the Lind Forest INAI site (#1266) and a portion of the Nippersink Creek INAI site (#1506). The proposed addition includes grade B mesic forest, grade C mesic savanna, grade B seep, high-gradient small stream, and a cultural community consisting of pastureland. To date, 218 native plant species have been recorded from the Nature Preserve and proposed addition, and the site supports the state-endangered nodding trillium (*Trillium cernuum*), ill-scented trillium (*T. erectum*), and the state-threatened pale vetchling (*Lathyrus ochroleucus*). Two state-threatened mussels (spike [*Elliptio dilatata*] and slippershell mussel [*Alasmidonta viridis*]) have been documented from Nippersink Creek, and it is likely both occur within the boundary of both the nature preserve and proposed addition. Extensive wildlife surveys of the site conducted by the MCCD report eight fish and four mussel species that are identified by the IWAP as species in greatest need of conservation. Protection and stewardship of the proposed addition supports action #7 of the forest campaign “... to restore and manage high-quality examples of all forest communities,” action #2b of that campaign which calls for contributing to “...ecological connectivity among forests and other habitat patches,” and action #6 of the streams campaign “...to restore and manage high-quality examples of all river, stream, lake, and pond communities...” Dedication of the proposed addition will increase Lind Forest Nature Preserve from 20 acres to 64.1 acres and honor Helen Lind’s vision for land protection. This proposal reserves the right for the MCCD to conduct a master planning process to determine appropriate public access and recreation opportunities in accordance with INPC guidelines. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission’s 209th Meeting in September, 2011 (Resolution 2154). At that time, the proposed acreage of dedicated land was reported to be

39.13 acres. The INPC is now being asked to grant final approval for a higher acreage (an additional 4.97 acres). The instrument of dedication reflects a total of 44.1 acres.

REPORT
Steven Byers
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 22:* Winnebago Co. – Buffer Addition to Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve, Dedication

The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District (WCFPD) requests final approval for the dedication of 187 acres as a buffer addition to Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve. The proposed buffer addition is located along the border of the Freeport Section of the Rock River Hill Country Natural Division and the Winnebago Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division. The site contains a variety of natural communities and prairie reconstructions. The site is part of the Sugar River INAI site (#1466), and provides suitable habitat for at least nine species of state-listed animals and four state-listed plants. The dedicated buffer area will serve as essential land protection around Colored Sands Nature Preserve. Approval of this buffer dedication supports action steps identified in the IWAP under the campaigns for prairies, wetlands, forests, and invasive species. Dedication of the proposed 187 acres buffer addition will increase the acreage of Colored Sands Bluff Nature Preserve from 54.7 acres to 241.7 acres. The proposed buffer was granted preliminary approval by the INPC at its 210th Meeting in January, 2012 (Resolution 2169). At that time, the proposed acreage of dedicated land was reported to be 184.7 acres. The INPC is now being requested to grant final approval for a slightly higher acreage (an additional 2.1 acres) that resulted from a recent ground survey. The instrument of dedication reflects this new acreage (187 acres).

REPORT
Russell Heinrichs
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 23:* Winnebago Co. – Buffer Addition to Sugar River Alder Nature Preserve, Dedication

The WCFPD requests final approval for dedication of 317 acres as a buffer addition to Sugar River Alder Nature Preserve. The proposed buffer addition, located in both the Freeport Section of the Rock River Hill Country Natural Division and the Winnebago Section of the Northeastern Morainal Natural Division, contains a complete cross section of natural communities representative of this area of the Sugar River which range from wet-floodplain forest and sedge meadow to dry sand prairie and savanna to upland forest. These communities are part of the Sugar River INAI site (#1466) and the INAI site provides habitat to at least nine species of state-listed animals and at least 11 species of state-listed plants. Sugar River Alder Nature Preserve has three of these state-listed plants onsite and includes or helps protect all nine of the state-listed animals. The Sugar River's riparian corridor serves as a critical migration route for many species of birds and is likely important nesting ground for several imperiled species. The proposed buffer addition will serve as essential protection around Sugar River Alder Nature Preserve and the Sugar River. The recreated and restored prairies add valuable native habitat back to the landscape of Illinois. The restoration work

already completed by WCFPD staff serves as a solid indicator that the site will continue to more closely resemble its former presettlement conditions. Protection of the proposed buffer addition supports the action steps identified for the prairie campaign, wetlands campaign, forests campaign, and invasive species campaign outlined in the IWAP. Dedication of this buffer addition will increase the acreage of Sugar River Alder Nature Preserve from 184.7 acres to 501.7 acres. The site received preliminary approval for dedication at the Commission's 210th Meeting in January, 2012 (Resolution 2172).

REPORT
Russell Heinrichs
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Final Approval for Dedication

Item 24:* Alexander and Pulaski Co. - Cache River Hydrology Demonstration Project

Approximately 25 years ago, resource managers developed a list of landscape-scale restoration alternatives that were thought to be essential for preserving the natural features and character found in the Cache River State Natural Area located in the Lower Cache River Swamp (INAI #0610). These alternatives included structures to restore stream gradient and manage water surface elevation at the eastern and western boundaries of the Lower Cache River Swamp; selective dredging to restore permanent open deep water within the river channel and hydraulically connected swamps, ponds and sloughs; and partial reconnection of the upper and lower river segments. Of particular importance at this time is a project proposed by Southern Illinois University at Carbondale that would demonstrate the benefits of partial reconnection, particularly focusing on capturing the importance of impacts during very low flows that occur naturally each year during the dry summer months. This information will provide qualitative and quantitative data necessary for selection of a reconnection pathway and structural modifications that will enable biological and hydraulic connectivity. The presentation will update the Commission on significant progress related to the design and implementation of watershed-scale restoration measures proposed over 20 years ago by the Cache River Wetlands Joint Venture Partnership.

REPORT
Mark Guetersloh
Department of Natural Resources
Kelly Neal
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED
Approval of Special Use Permit

Item 25: Natural Areas Acquisition Fund Fiscal Year 2013 Defense Proposals

Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) capital appropriation in FY 2012 included \$75,000 to fund contractual natural area defense activities needed on properties included in one of the INPC's protection programs. From the FY 2008, FY 2009, FY 2010 and FY 2011 NAAF capital appropriation, \$475,000, \$225,000, \$225,000 and \$225,000 was appropriated as a part of the NAAF capital budget respectively to defend natural areas statewide. Approximately \$230,000 of the four years of appropriation authority remained unassigned to specific projects at the end of FY 2011. Appropriation authority has exceeded revenues actually in NAAF. The aforementioned appropriation authority remains available to address threats that

may arise provided dollars are available within NAAF. NAAF defense projects that were begun in years prior to FY 2012 and continued or completed during FY 2012 include: funding the Illinois State Geological Survey to collect and review groundwater data needed to assess impacts of proposed off-site development, threats or damages, prepare Class III Special Resource Groundwater petitions to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for INPC program sites and provide groundwater consulting services for the INPC staff. In FY 2012, there was a new contract for the continuation of the aforementioned groundwater consulting at \$130,000. It is uncertain what will be appropriated in FY 2013 for NAAF capital. Similar to FY 2012, \$75,000 may be the allocation to defense from this year's appropriation. Specific projects will be selected as needed but will likely include a continuation of the aforementioned groundwater data and consultation services at some level. Specific projects funded during FY 2013 will be reported in May, 2013.

REPORT

Randy Heidorn
Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval of FY 2013 Defense Project Plan

Item 26: Natural Areas Acquisition Fund Fiscal Year 2013 Land Acquisition Proposals

The NAAF is administered by the IDNR with review and recommendation of land acquisition projects by the INPC. In FY 2010, the IDNR identified, and the INPC approved for acquisition, 20 high priority tracts of land currently for sale within 16 natural areas. The IDNR used funds from the NAAF to acquire one natural area tract of 302 acres during FY 2010. There was no NAAF funded land acquisition in FY 2011 and NAAF was used to acquire one natural area (a 19-acre tract) from the INPC approved list in FY 2012. Depending on the final IDNR budget, tracts from this same approved list will be considered for state acquisition in FY 2013 if and when funds become available. All the proposed acquisition parcels are included on the INAI, and/or provide habitat for endangered or threatened species of animals or plants. The proposed acquisitions total approximately 2,500 acres and would cost approximately \$12,000,000 to acquire. The proposed capital budget for acquisition, preservation and stewardship from NAAF has not been established, and a final decision on the amount of money, if any, to be used for land acquisition in FY 2013 has not been made.

REPORT

Don McFall
Department of Natural Resources

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Approval of the FY 2013 Acquisition Plan

Item 27: Review of Closed Meeting Minutes

There are four sets of minutes regarding land acquisition from closed meetings of the Commission. The meeting dates were August 2, 2005, May 2, 2006, May 6, 2008, and May 5, 2009. These meetings were closed in accordance with the Open Meetings Act to discuss the purchase of real property. Section 2.06 of the Open Meetings Act provides that public bodies, "shall periodically, but no less than semi-annually, meet to review minutes of all closed sessions. At such meetings, a determination shall be made and reported in an open session that: 1. the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of those minutes, or 2.

that the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection.”

REPORT

Randy Heidorn

Nature Preserves Commission

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

Disposition of Closed Meeting

Minutes

Item 28: Public Comment Period (3 minutes per person)

Item 29: Other Business

Items may be discussed, but no final action may occur for items not previously included on the agenda.

Item 30: Adjournment